

TITLE OF THE INVENTION

Carousel-Type Holder for Dispensers for Tape Marker Flags and POST-IT Stacks

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

Not applicable

STATEMENT REGARDING FEDERALLY SPONSORED RESEARCH OR DEVELOPMENT

Not applicable

INCORPORATION-BY-REFERENCE OF MATERIAL SUBMITTED ON A COMPACT DISC

Not applicable

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Field of the Invention

This invention relates generally to office desktop accessories and more particularly to a carousel-type holder disposable on a horizontal working surface for holding dispensers for tape marker flags and stacks of POST-IT lightly adhesive sheets.

Description of Related Art

The use of lightly adhesive POST-IT sheets having write-on surfaces for adhesively attaching notes and memos to other objects has become well known and is a part of every well-organized desk and office work surface. These conventional POST-IT pads are available in separate stacks, removable one sheet at a time, each sheet having a light adhesive over common edge margins to maintain the stack.

The next improvement in the POST-IT type product has been the alternate edge adhesive attachment between successive sheets which has facilitated dispensing the POST-IT sheets one at a time from a suitably constructed holder. A still further

improvement in this basic concept of alternate adhesive attachment between adjacent sheets has extended into tape marker flags having a portion thereof bearing a highlighted color to draw attention to an area of a work document such as for indicating a signature line and the like.

The following prior U.S. patents deal with holders for the alternately attached POST-IT stacks and tape marker flag dispensers specially constructed for the dispensing of the tape marker flags one at a time for adhesive attachment to other objects:

U.S. Patent No. 4781306 to Smith

U.S. Patent No. 5411168 to Mertens et al.

U.S. Patent No. 4964519 to Sugarman et al.

U.S. Patent No. 5526955 to Windorski et al.

U.S. Patent No. 4562938 to Loder

U.S. Patent No. 5794815 to Carlson et al.

U.S. Patent No. 4401233 to Frey

U.S. Patent No. 4921127 to Windorski

U.S. Patent No. 4796781 to Windorski

U.S. Patent No. 4986440 to Windorski

U.S. Patent No. 4416392 to Smith

U.S. Patent No. 5397117 to Mertens

U.S. Patent No. 4848584 to Windorski

U.S. Patent No. 5080254 to Feer

U.S. Patent No. 6571951 to Levine

U.S. Patent No. 6382428 to Hurwitz

U.S. Patent No. 6068138 to Carlson et al.

U.S. Patent No. 5964375 to Carlson et al.

U.S. Patent No. 5769270 to Fujisawa et al.

U.S. Patent No. 5518144 to Samuelson et al.

U.S. Patent No. 5358141 to Carlson et al.

U.S. Patent No. 5299712 to Carlson et al.

U.S. Patent No. 5183153 to Linn

U.S. Patent No. 5167346 to Bodziak

U.S. Patent No. 5165570 to Windorski et al.

U.S. Patent No. 5158205 to Bodziak et al.

U.S. Patent No. 5143250 to Freitag

U.S. Patent No. 5086946 to Blackwell et al.

U.S. Patent No. 5080255 to Windorski

U.S. Patent No. 5067628 to Evenson

U.S. Patent No. 4993590 to Windorski

U.S. Patent No. D327294 to Feer

The present invention not only takes advantage of the alternately attached POST-IT type stack of sheets and prepackaged tape marker flags held within a dispenser, but also may utilize unpackaged or naked stacks of the tape marker flags for greater economy.

The POST-IT products, as well as the adhesive marker flags, are now available in an array of sizes and some attempt as shown in U.S. Patent 4964519 to accommodate holding at least two separate configurations of these products is there shown. However,

the present invention goes substantially further in providing a carousel-type structure which will hold a plurality of differently sized such products either in the form of prepackaged tape marker flags, unpackaged or naked tape marker flags and stacked POST-IT sheets, all of which are readily available by simply rotating the carousel housing about its upright axis to the selection desired which is then removable one at a time by simply pulling the selected one from the slot formed in the side door which covers each of these adhesive products.

BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

This invention is directed to a carousel-type holder for dispensing tape marker flags and flexible sheet material from a stack including a plurality of sheets disposed one on top of another, each sheet having a band of relatively releasable repositionable adhesive coated along one edge thereof, the sheets being stacked with the adhesive coated edge of each successive sheet disposed along alternate opposite edges to maintain the sheets in the stack. The dispensers include an enlarged body portion having an open ended, tubular neck portion and a supply of tape marker flags in the body portion. A preferred base is adapted to be received and supported on a substantially horizontal supporting surface while a housing is supported for rotation by said base about an upright rotational axis including a plurality of outwardly opening upright holding cavities and an openable side door for each holding cavity. Dispensers and stacks, as preferred and preselected, are each removably receivable in a predetermined position in one cavity, the neck portion of each dispenser aligned with the slot whereby the flags and sheets may be selectively withdrawn through the corresponding slot one at a time.

It is therefore an object of this invention to provide a carousel-type holder for dispensers of tape marker flags and stacks of POST-IT sheets one at a time from selected individual sections of the housing of the device.

Yet another object of this invention is to provide a holder for a broad range of sizes of the various available tape marker flags and stacks of POST-IT note sheets, all of which are contained in a single housing for ready withdrawal therefrom.

In accordance with these and other objects which will become apparent hereinafter, the instant invention will now be described with reference to the accompanying drawings.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE SEVERAL VIEWS OF THE DRAWING(S)

Figure 1 is an exploded perspective view of the preferred embodiment of the invention.

Figure 2 is a perspective view of the housing shown in Figure 1 with all of the side doors in the open position.

Figure 3 is a top elevation view of an alternate embodiment of Figure 2 showing the various sized tape marker flag dispensers in phantom.

Figure 3A is an enlarged top plan view of Figure 1.

Figures 4 and 5 are perspective views from two different angles of the embodiment of the invention shown in Figure 1.

Figures 6 and 7 are views similar to Figures 4 and 5 showing the tape marker flags and POST-IT note sheet stack held within the housing ready for use.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

Referring now to the drawings, the preferred embodiment of the invention is there shown in exploded perspective form in Figure 1 generally at numeral **10**. This carousel-type holder **10** generally includes a housing **12** and a base **14**, the base **14** being receivable and supported atop a generally horizontal work surface such as that of a desk or countertop. Both housing **12** and base member **16** are formed of molded, preferably transparent or translucent plastic material.

The base member **16** has a complementary truncated three-sided pyramid-type shape to that of the housing **12** and includes an elongated upright support shaft **18** extending upwardly therefrom about a vertical rotational axis **19**. A reinforcing plate **20** attached to the top surface **22** of the base member **16** is also provided.

The housing **12**, as also seen in Figures 2, 3 and at **12'** in Figure 3A includes an upright inner frame or core **24** or **24'** in Figure 3 which generally includes three equally sized upright inner cavity walls **34**, **36** and **38** formed into a triangular cross section in the plan view having top and bottom wall portions **26** and **28**, respectively, attached at the upper and lower ends, respectively. In the preferred embodiment, the plan profile of the top and bottom wall portions **26** and **28** are arcuate segments forming an enlarged triangular shape generally in stylish cooperation with the top profile of the inner frame **24**. However, a straight-edged profile and other multi-sided shapes are envisioned.

Individual holding cavities are defined between the inner cavity walls **34**, **36** and **38** and spaced pairs of positioning or retaining strips **76/78**, **48/50**, and **66/68** and **68/70**, respectively. As seen in Figure 3A, these holding cavities are shown generally at **80**, **82**, **84** and **86**.

Each of these cavities **80**, **82**, and **84/86** is enclosed by a separate side door **42**, **44** and **46** and **46'** in Figure 3. Each of these side doors is pivotally attached at the corners of the top and bottom panels **26** and **28** about respective upright pivotal axes **43**, **45** and **47** and pivotally open in the direction of arrows **B**, **C** and **D** in Figures 2 and 3. Interfering latch and handle structure is shown generally at numerals **62** and **64** in Figure 2 only. Alternately, other detent interfering structure may be utilized to maintain each of these side doors in a closed position.

The side doors, **42**, **44**, **46** and **46'** include elongated slots **52**, **56/58**, and **60**, respectively formed centrally therethrough as shown, each of which is sized according to the width of the respective tape marker flags and POST-IT adhesive sheets preselected for being held within the corresponding holding cavities as will be described more fully herebelow.

The housing **12** or **12'** is preferably supported by the elongated support shaft **18** about its rotational axis **19**, the support shaft **18** being insertable centrally through a passageway formed longitudinally through the inner frame **24** and receiving support at its upper distal end **18a** against a support bearing **30** attached to the inner surface of the top wall portion **26**. By this means, housings **12** and **12'** are freely rotatable in the direction of arrow **A** in Figure 1 about the upright rotational axis **19**.

Holding cavities **82**, **84** and **86** are, by design choice, sized in width, as established by retention strips **48/50**, **66/68** and **68/70**, respectively, to frictionally receive a dispenser shown in phantom at **G**, **J**, **L** and **L'** in Figure 3 and in solid lines in Figures 4 to 7, each dispenser including an enlarged body portion having a laterally extending, open-ended tubular neck portion of elongated cross sectional length and reduced cross sectional

width positioned centrally on the body portion. A supply of tape marker flags are held within the body portion, each marker flag being individually dispensable through the neck portion of the dispenser. Details of this well-known prior art structure have been disclosed in U.S. Patent 5411168 as also set forth in the prior art summary hereinabove. Again, note the economical substitution of a naked stack of tape marker flags not held in the dispenser.

When the corresponding side doors **42, 44, 46** or **46'** are in the open position, the preselected dispenser **G, J, L** or **L'** may be inserted between the respective pairs of retention strips with the next ready tape marker flag **H, K, and M**, as seen in Figures 6 and 7, being inserted outwardly through the respective slots **56, 58, 52** and **60**. Thereafter, the side door is pivotally moved about the upright support axes **43, 45** and **47** into the closed position. The entire housing **12** is positionable over the upright support shaft **18**, whereafter the housing may be freely rotated in the direction of arrow **A** in Figure 1 to orient the particular side door enclosing the desired tape marker flag to face the user for easy removal therefrom.

Alternately to placing a dispenser filled with tape marker flags into the largest of the cavities **80** which has the vertical slot **60** formed through the corresponding side door **46**, a stack of conventional alternately attached POST-IT sheets may be inserted between the retention strips **76** and **78**. The back or bottom sheet of each of the POST-IT stacks may bear against inner cavity wall **34** to maintain the top sheet in closer alignment with, and passing outwardly from, upright slot **60** for ready access and dispensing of a POST-IT sheet one at a time by manually drawing it therefrom.

Note in Figure 3 that, although it is preferred to have the retention strips formed as a unit with, and extending inwardly from, the inner surface of each of the side doors, alternately, these retention strips 48' and 50' may be attached to the corresponding inner cavity wall for frictionally receiving and holding the dispenser L'.

Note further that any predetermined or preselected combination of sizes of dispensers and corresponding tape marker flags or stacks of naked tape marker flags held therewithin and POST-IT stacks may be accommodated by the selection of corresponding size of slots through which the tape marker flags and POST-IT sheets are removed one at a time and the spacing between the retention strips for releasable securement of the selected dispenser and POST-IT stack.

While the instant invention has been shown and described herein in what are conceived to be the most practical and preferred embodiments, it is recognized that departures may be made therefrom within the scope of the invention, which is therefore not to be limited to the details disclosed herein, but is to be afforded the full scope of the claims so as to embrace any and all equivalent apparatus and articles.